

THE MODERN BONNET.

—Or is it a hat?

Dome of St. Peter's! tell me that. It is broadly conceived, crown, brim and bow. It is grand with a grandeur grand, you know; But somehow I hardly seem made on the plan of the grandest kind of a grand young man. And this, perhaps, is why at the play My thoughts from Hamlet or Lear will stray, And why to the bonnet in front I turn With "thoughts that breathe and words that burn."

The modern bonnet! ah, who designed This torment of torments to those behind For women may weep, and men may rage, The bonnet shuts out both player and stage; And soon, with its artless turns and jerks, Its nods and dips and feminine quirks, Makes the poor wretch in the seat behind, Who has paid for his place, as good as blind.

And still its challenge appears to be: "Pooh for the play! just look at me! My ostrich plume, so long and handsome, Is worth in itself a young king's ransom. Two feet across and one foot high Is little enough for such as I."

Oh, it spreads itself like a potentate! And yet, do you know, I pity the pate, The silly pate, that is under, or in, And doesn't know it commits a sin. She never suspects that the rights of man Are all at war with her bonnet's plan; And to gaze for three long mortal hours At its wide expanse, its plumes, its flowers, Is more than a man will care to do Who has come, one may say, with a different view, Not to speak of the ticket's cost, And the time and tone and temper lost.

And now I think of a maiden fair, Crowned with the wealth of her clinging hair, Who weareth a turban close and trim, Her sweet face glowing beneath its brim; And I say to myself: "If ever I wed, 'Twill be with a turban maid, instead Of the poor misguided feminine soul Who flauntheth a beaver aureole."

—Harper's Bazar.

LOVE ON A FARM.

"Are you my Aunt Dorcas?"

Mrs. Torrance had been entertaining a Quilting Bee that afternoon, and she had just got the frame out of the way, the dishes washed up, and the apartment generally "tidied," when there came a meek tap at the door, and there in the yellow April twilight stood a small figure in a gray traveling shawl, and holding a bag.

"Sakes alive!" said Mrs. Torrance, "Who be you?"

"I am Emily," said the girl. "Please let me in, for I am tired and cold. I've walked all the way from the station, and I've had nothing to eat since noon."

"Well, I never!" said Mrs. Torrance. "You're the city schoolma'am ain't you, as went out to live with Cousin Shadrack? And, he's dead, and the money has all gone to the Baptist Widow and Orphan Fund! You didn't make much by that move, did you? And you've come to us now, though we wasn't stylish enough for you before. Well, come in, come in!"

And Mrs. Torrance, who was essentially a kind-hearted woman, albeit she could not repress the sneer that rose to her lips, moved the low rocker to the fire, and flung another log on the andirons.

Cousin Shadrack had been the family Apple of Discord ever since they could remember. He was rich, he was eccentric, he was crabbed. He had shut the door in the faces of all his relations until, toward the last, sick and feeble, he had signified his desire that Emily Alden should come and take care of him. And Emily had gone.

There had been a spice of jealousy in the family as regarded Emily, for a long time. Emily had been looked upon as "proud" and "stuck up," because, instead of entering a factory, or learning the dressmaker's trade, she had elected to be a teacher. She had never visited Job Torrance's family until now—now that Cousin Shadrack had willed his money to the Baptist Widows and Orphans—her own mother was dead, and her step-father, a pompous old wholesale grocer, objected to step-children, so that there seemed to be no other haven of refuge left to her.

Who could blame Mrs. Torrance for a momentary feeling of triumph, when Emily Alden came thus to her doorstep in the twilight of that April day?

But she helped her off with her things, made a cup of tea for her, and finally escorted her to a little room under the roof-tree, where the floor was covered by a home-made rag carpet, and the bed decorated with a rainbow "Job's troubles" quilt, and you could look out of the window into a greening meadow, where a whip-poor-will plainted its melancholy refrain.

"I hope you'll sleep well," said Mrs.

Torrance. "We eat breakfast at five." And then she went away.

Early as was the breakfast hour, Emily was awake at least an hour before it. As if the tumultuous glee of the robins and blue-birds in the old orchard would perjure any one to sleep! And as she lay with her cheek against the pillow, watching the rosy dawnlight creep up the wall, she heard the sound of voices in the meadow below her casement.

"What is she like, mother?" said Job, Junior, who was milking.

"Oh, she looks well enough," Mrs. Torrance carelessly responded. "Little and dark, with big shady eyes, and a real Torrance mouth. Doesn't talk a great deal, and is dressed shabby, as one might expect."

"Poor thing," said Job, pityingly.

"Well," said Mrs. Torrance, sharply, "I can't say but what I think she deserves all she's got. Them Aldens always were as proud as Lucifer."

"You'll keep her, mother, of course?"

"I suppose so," said Mrs. Torrance. "I don't suppose she's got anywhere else to go."

There was no more delicious dozing for Emily now. She rose hurriedly, dressed herself and came down stairs.

"Aunt Dorcas," she said, as she encountered that lady frying ham and eggs over the kitchen fire, "what is there in this neighborhood for a woman to do?"

"Eh?" said Mrs. Torrance in surprise.

"To earn my living, I mean!" explained Emily. "Is the district school supplied with a teacher?"

Mrs. Torrance nodded as she placed the slices of frizzling ham on a blue-edged plate, and arranged the eggs in golden spheres above.

"Is there a factory hereabouts?" pursued Emily.

"Used to be," said Mrs. Torrance, "but they failed, and it's been shut up for ten months."

"Do you know of any one who wants a girl?" pursued the city cousin.

Mrs. Torrance set the coffee pot on the table, blew the horn for Job, and then responded to her niece's query by a counter question:

"Why don't you stay here?"

"Because," said Emily with spirit, "I want to earn my own living."

"Well, you can earn it here, can't you? I was calculating to hire a girl this spring. And if you'll work honestly for it, I'll give you the six dollars a month I was going to pay for hired help."

Emily's face brightened.

"I should like that," said she.

And then Job came in, tall, handsome and flushed, his curls yet wet from the spring into which he had dipped them, and a sprig of trailing arbutus pinned into his coat, and spoke a frank welcome to the young girl whom he had never before seen.

So Cousin Shadrack Seely is dead," he said.

"Yes," said Emily, quietly.

"Did you like him?"

"No," confessed the girl. "He was cross and surly, and had no sympathy with anybody. But I tried to be kind to him, and he kissed me once before he died, and said I had been a good girl."

"And then went and left his money to the Refuge for Baptist Widows and Orphans!" said Mrs. Torrance. "That's Cousin Shadrack all over."

"He had a right to do as he pleased with his money," said Emily, a faint glow rising to her cheeks.

"Well, it's all over and gone," said Mrs. Torrance. "There's no use talking about it now."

And she sighed softly to think how many of life's hard angles might have been avoided in the future, if only Cousin Shadrack had been less interested in the Baptist widows and orphans.

At the end of a month, Mrs. Torrance was forced to acknowledge that Emily had well earned her six dollars a month and board. The girl certainly had about her that wonderful magnetic power which philosophers dub "executive ability" and New England house-keepers call "faculty." She was a natural cook—she did things without seeming to take any trouble at all.

"I don't understand it," said Mrs. Torrance. "A little, dark, slim thing that was always brought up to sit with her hands folded."

And one sultry day in July, when Job and Emily came in from strawberrying, with crimsoned fingers, laughing faces, and baskets heaped high

with the fragrant fruit, Mrs. Torrance started in the solitude of the dairy, where she was making "cottage cheese." "I declare," she cried, "I wonder I never thought of that before. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I never can consent to it in the living world."

Job came to her that same evening.

"Mother," said he, "Emily has promised to be my wife."

Mrs. Torrance burst into tears.

"You're only six-and-twenty years old, Job," she faltered.

"Just two years older than when my father married you, mother. Now don't turn your face away; but tell me plainly—have you any fault to find with my choice?"

"No—no," confessed Mrs. Torrance.

"Do you think I could possibly win a sweeter girl than Emily Alden?"

"No, I don't suppose you could," answered the mother-in-law elect; "but it's natural, Job, to feel a little jealous when you see some one else taking the first place in your child's heart."

But when Job brought Emily in to receive her greeting Mrs. Torrance had sufficiently conquered herself to bid her new daughter welcome.

"Though I supposed, Emily," said she, a little bitterly, "that you looked higher than a farmer once."

"I never looked higher than one of Nature's noblemen," said Emily, with a smile that fairly won the old lady's heart.

That same evening as they all sat together in the orange twilight, with the scent of tall, white lilies in the air, Emily suddenly broke the silence.

"Job," said she, "would you like to be rich?"

"Well, yes," said Job, "I'd like money enough to keep my wife in luxury."

"Would you, Aunt Dorcas?" said Emily, turning to Mrs. Torrance.

"Of course I should," said that matron, vigorously plying her knitting needles; "but I don't ever expect it."

"But you are rich," said Emily, with a little tremor in her voice. "Job is rich—we are all rich together with Cousin Shadrack's money."

"But," cried Mrs. Torrance, "I thought he left it all to the Baptist widows and orphans."

"Not all," said Emily. "It is a secret, but I may tell you now. Half was left to the Refuge—the other thirty thousand is mine, to be paid over to me on the day on which I marry a man, who, ignorant of Cousin Shadrack's bequest, has loved me loyally and well. It was the old man's whim, and I have respected it. Oh, Aunt Dorcas, I came to you because in my loneliness and bewilderment I knew not where else to go—but I little dreamed that I was entering the kingdom of a noble heart."

It was true. Shadrack Seely, eccentric in life, had been equally eccentric in his death—and when Mr. Mustybill, the lawyer, paid over the legacy, he said chuckling:

"It is all right! It's exactly as my poor client would have had it. I congratulate you, Mrs. Job Torrance!"

And Mrs. Torrance, the elder, has a higher opinion than ever of her daughter-in-law's attractions, now that they are in a background of gold.—Shirley Browne.

"GENTLEMEN of the jury," said a blundering council in a suit about a lot of hogs, "there were just thirty-six in the drove. Please remember the fact—thirty six hogs; just three times as many as in that jury box, gentlemen."

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